

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

Claim 20 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 21 and 23. Claims 21 and 23 have accordingly been cancelled without prejudice. Other editorial changes have been effected to the claim to clarify the questions raised by the Examiner. Specifically, the Examiner stated that it cannot be determined from the claim if the amine weight percent content is based upon the weight of the decomposed polyol sans urea or upon the weight of the decomposed polyol containing the urea.

As taught in the specification, the amine weight percent content is based upon the weight of the decomposed polyol sans urea. See page 11, line 23 to page 12, line 5, and page 17, lines 14-19 of the specification.

The rejection of claim 23 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph is thus deemed to be overcome.

Claims 20-23 were further rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over JP 54-78798. This ground of rejection is deemed to be overcome in view of the foregoing amendments.

Claim 20 now defines over the prior art by specifying that the urea is added to the decomposed and recovered polyol, and heated at a temperature of 120°C to 220°C. Furthermore, the claim requires that the decomposed and recovered polyol contains 5 weight % or less of amines prior to addition of urea, and that the urea be added in a proportion of 0.4-1.5 equivalents per equivalent of amino group of the amines contained in the decomposed and recovered polyol. See page 25, line 23 to page 27, line 19 of the specification.

The claims as amended are not suggested by the cited reference.

The reference does not disclose any particular conditions for processing the decomposed and recovered polyol by adding urea therein. The present invention differs from the reference cited in that it specifies the particular conditions for processing the decomposed and recovered polyol which is recovered by hydrolyzing the polyurethane resin, that are:

(1) a specific proportion of urea is added to the decomposed and recovered polyol containing a specific percentage of amines, that are recovered in the recovering process, and

(2) the polyol and urea are heated at a specific temperature, so that the recovered polyol can be used as raw polyol for producing urethane resin.

In other words, the cited reference fails to disclose or suggest that controlling (1) the heating temperature, (2) the specific proportion of urea added to the decomposed and recovered polyol, and (3) the specific amount of amines contained in the decomposed and recovered polyol, are critical process parameters for achieving the desired polyol product, which polyol can be used as a raw material without further treatment to remove harmful amines.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that each ground of rejection set forth in the Official Action have been overcome and that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, such allowance is solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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